

# Establish Effective Workplace Relationships

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**BSBWOR401A**

*Expand your thinking...*

**Student Workbook**

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# Collect, analyse and communicate information and ideas

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***Relevant information is collected from appropriate sources, analysed and shared with the work team to improve work performance***

## **Communication and Information Management**

Good communication is fundamental to organisational effectiveness. The right data and information must be collected and analysed if good decisions are to be made.

A relevant, systematic record management system is a must so that people can gain easy access to data and information they need to assist them to do their work.

Communication is the passage of information from one party to one or more other parties. Effective communication occurs when the message that was sent was received as it was meant.

Poor communication processes cause many work problems including:

- Frustration and stress
- People feeling left out
- Poor productivity
- Errors and rework
- Conflict
- Lack of commitment.

Organisations should have documented communication and information management procedures that all employees are trained to use systematically.

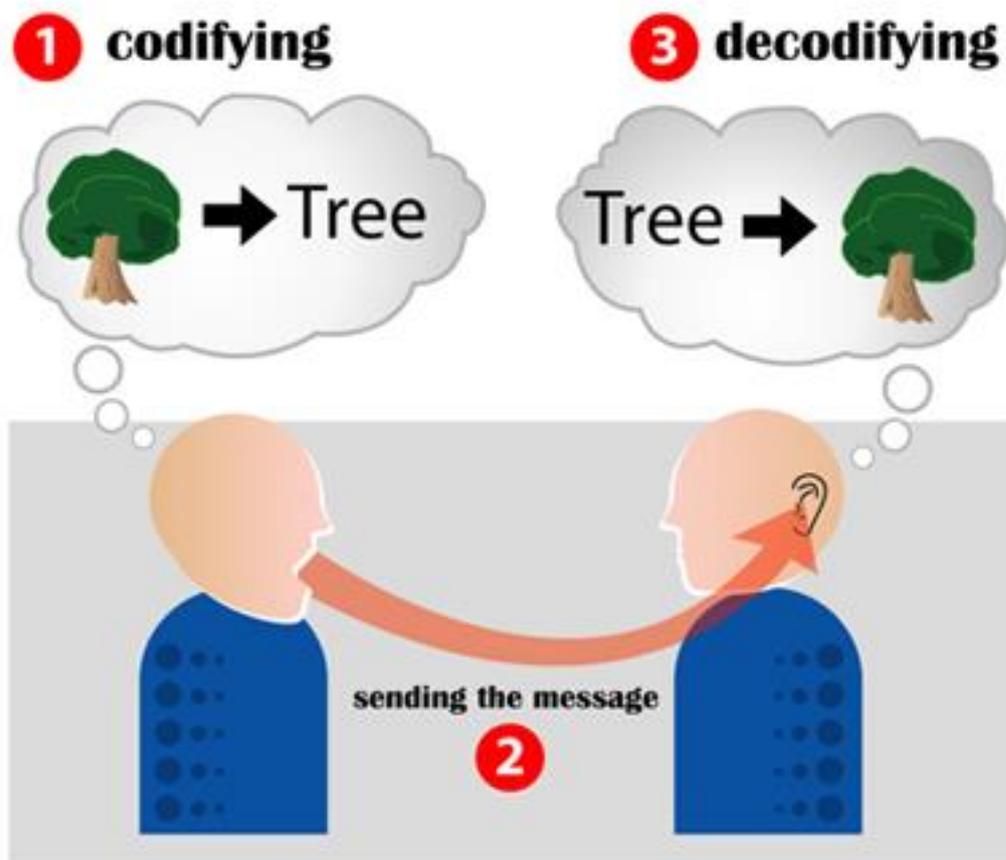
Procedures should be designed to allow easy communication among people at all levels of an organisation. A hierarchical approach can cause difficulties.

External communication procedures should be designed so that a two way flow of information can occur. These too should be systematic and communicated to all concerned parties. The most appropriate communication methods should be selected to enable all relevant people to give and receive information.

Systematic record keeping systems help the communication process by allowing easy access to the information by those who need it. Maintaining confidentiality, and keeping records for the required period, ensures that the integrity of the system is maintained.

Information systems should take account of the fact that people's learning styles vary. Vital information such as policies should therefore be provided in a range of formats including email, PowerPoint presentations, formal launches, discussion groups at team meetings, and stored on the intranet with frequently asked questions, to cover different learning preferences.

### Activity - Communication



- What might be some of the problems that can happen in the exchange of information between the two parties?
- Describe a) the ways in which information is communicated in your organisation and b) how these take the need of different audiences into account.
- How is information communicated to customers and suppliers and other important stakeholders in your organisation?
- Do you have a documented communication procedure? How has it been communicated and implemented? Explain.

- How do you think communication could be improved in your organisation? Remember to consider a range of communication and learning preferences.
- How are records managed in your organisation and how do you think the records management system could be improved?

***Ideas and information are communicated in a manner which is appropriate and sensitive to the cultural and social diversity of the audience and any special needs***

## **Vision and Values**

### **Vision**

A vision is simply a statement about where an organisation is going – its ideals, the products and services it provides and to whom it provides them. A “visionless” organisation is a directionless organisation. Every organisation needs to be steered somewhere if its people are to be able to work together to meet their customers’ requirements.

### **Values**

There are certain codes of ethics and beliefs that guide the actions of people in workplaces. These are commonly called “values”.

Some examples of “values” include:

- Honesty
- Openness
- Access and Equity
- Respect
- Empathy
- Integrity



When there are widely varying sets of values guiding the actions of people, it is likely that conflicts will arise and the organisation will experience high levels of internal and external customer dissatisfaction.

When values are not stated and discussed, people will often not understand each other’s actions and there will be little evidence of

values being reflected in policies, plans and procedures.

When values are not purposefully reflected in policies, plans and procedures, people will not see the links between actions and beliefs and will tend to do their own thing.

### Activity – Vision and Values

Answer the following in relation to your company’s vision and then discuss your responses in a small group.

- Is there a documented vision statement for your company? If so, what does it say?
- Is there a documented set of values that the people in your company are meant to work by?
- If so: What are they?
- Are these values reflected in the way in which people in the organisation actually do their work and conduct business?
- How do you rate yourself with respect to those values?

***Consultation processes are implemented to encourage employees to contribute to issues related to their work, and feedback in regard to outcomes is promptly relayed to the work team***

### Five Steps to Creating Entrepreneurial Thinkers

There are five steps that you as a manager can take to help your employees think and act more like entrepreneurs on the job:



In implementing these strategies, remember that you are not trying to create a bunch of independent decision-makers who don't take into consideration the needs of their colleagues or the organisation. You are simply trying to help your employees feel a sense of ownership and pride in their work and a sense of commitment to the organisation and its goals.

### **Step 1. Explain the Organisation**

One key to your success as a manager is that you understand the organisation's mission, its goals, and its strategies for achieving these goals. As a manager, you know how much it helps to see the big picture within which your specific responsibilities lie. Because you understand how you fit into the organisation, you better understand your role and why the company values your contribution. It's easier to identify with the company and feel motivated to work harder and smarter.

It's the same for your employees. If they understand about the organisation and their role in it, they can feel similarly motivated and will be much more likely to develop a positive attitude toward their jobs and their fellow employees. You don't need to make everyone managers, of course. But you can help your employees better understand what's going on beyond their desks, cubicles, and work stations and outside the walls of your department. When they know how they fit in and the difference they make, they can do their work more intelligently.

How can you help your employees become more aware of their role and feel more a part of what's happening throughout the organisation? Here are a few suggestions for you to consider:

- Give employees books and articles about the organisation. Keep a scrapbook to record important chapters in the organisation's history—the bad as well as the good. This will give employees an historical perspective of the company and inspire in them a greater sense of identity and pride.
- If the organisation issues an annual report, show employees how to understand and interpret it. Point out the CEO's message, which can be valuable in clarifying the organisation's mission, measuring progress toward long-term goals, and describing challenges the organisation might face in the future.

- Share the monthly departmental profit-and-loss statement with employees. This will help them understand even better how their work fits into their small section of the organisation, their neighbourhood of your economic community.
- Help employees understand your organisation's mission statement. Look for opportunities to discuss the mission statement with members of your team. Show how it drives behaviour and decisions in the organisation.
- Encourage employees to identify things they can do to contribute directly to achieving the organisation's mission statement objectives. Discuss with them the role(s) of your department and whatever strategic goals you might have. Then give them the chance to act on their ideas.
- Encourage employees to tackle obstacles by having them lead task forces to find solutions and begin implementing them. This can be as formal or informal as you deem appropriate. What's essential is to encourage your employees to think together about how they can improve their work environment and the performance of your department.
- Reinforce the value of your organisation's communications department, if you have one.



Suggest that employees contact the department for copies of executive briefings, recent newspaper clippings that profile or discuss the organisation, recent ad campaigns, and corporate brochures. Or, simply get copies of these documents yourself and post them around your department.

## **Step 2. Demonstrate How the Organisation Operates and Generates Income**

As a manager, you understand how your organisation operates and manages its finances. So you might not realise what it's like to work without knowing how every person and every job affects the bottom line. When employees become aware of how the organisation runs and how it spends and brings in money, they become more motivated to help make a difference.

How can you help each of your employees understand how he or she alone impacts the organisation's bottom line? Here are a few recommendations:

- Arrange for a business basics training program for all employees. There are several on the market that can be customised to your organisation's needs. These programs may use a game format to explain how your organisation operates and how it makes and loses money. This can be an enjoyable way to teach employees the business.
- Give employees documents that describe strategic plans, financial goals, and operating philosophies of the organisation. Again, the corporate communications office may have

just what you need. You might want to explain a few of these documents at every departmental meeting. There's no need to turn your meeting into a seminar; just take a few minutes to sum up each document and why it matters to the organisation and your employees. Then, summarise the impact of your group in terms of costs and income generated.

- Analyse scenarios that show the impact one person has on the entire organisation. This can be a real eye-opener! *The Great Game of Business* offers some good suggestions on how to do this.

You can probably come up with scenarios for your organisation. In fact, most organisations have horror stories involving employees who didn't care enough about a particular job or didn't fully understand the importance of what they were expected to do. Whether you find actual examples or create realistic scenarios, the point is to help your employees see how one person's attitude and behaviour might directly impact the organisation's bottom line, potential pay raises, bonuses, profit sharing, and so on.

### **Example**

Let's assume a baggage handler for an airline isn't very motivated to do his job. How does his performance affect the organisation?

A flight arrives late and a passenger's briefcase must be transferred to another flight within minutes. The baggage handler doesn't feel like hustling the briefcase to the other flight. He thinks, "*What's in it for me?*" So he leaves the case on the ramp until the next flight to that city departs—six hours later.

The passenger waiting for the briefcase has an important meeting that evening and needs some materials from the briefcase. She complains to a customer service rep for the airline, who explains that the briefcase will be arriving later, although not in time for the meeting. As a result, the irate frequent flier shares her dismay with other passengers and then later with her colleagues at the meeting, when she cannot provide the necessary materials to help her company land the big account.

What's the impact of the baggage handler on the airline's bottom line? The airline lost a valuable customer and perhaps all of her company's future business. It also probably lost a few of the other passengers and some of the customer's business associates. That means a significant loss in revenue, possibly tens of thousands of dollars, especially as the story ripples out even further—it also means more work for other employees, to make up for the negligence of that one baggage handler.

Multiply this impact by the number of incidents that might occur throughout this airline in a given year. Now we're talking about hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost revenue and a lot of extra effort and expense.

When you help your employees think in terms of the big picture and understand the domino effect of every action they take, you begin to instil in them an entrepreneurial mindset that creates a winning and motivated organisation. Of course, in some organisations, because of the attitude of management, this might also instil fear in employees. But the whole point of this book is to help you move away from that approach. You don't want to create fearful employees. You want to develop smart, skilled, and highly motivated employees who understand their role in helping the organisation succeed.

### Step 3. Help Your Employees Understand the Competition

When employees pull together to compete in the marketplace, their level of motivation rises when they understand just who and what they are competing against. Nothing brings a team together in tighter cooperation than the challenge of performing at higher and higher levels than its competitors, helping the organisation to grow as a result.

You don't necessarily need to take a "rah-rah-rah" attitude, as if organisations were high school football teams. This is just another way to help employees understand the big picture, because your competitors are part of that picture.

You can learn a lot from researching the competition—not just how to win a greater share of the market, but how to improve your organisation. In that spirit, here are some ways for you and your employees to learn more about your competitors:



- Encourage employees to ask customers to evaluate how your organisation measures up to the competition.
- Put someone in charge of obtaining the competition's promotional literature, so that you can all learn more about their products or services.
- Start a file of *competitor profiles*.
- These profiles can help your team develop strategies for gaining competitive advantage.

Just as it's important for your employees to know about your competitors, it's also important for them to know more about your industry. After all, if employees can become more motivated by understanding the impact of their presence in the organisation, they can also be inspired by knowing your organisation's impact in its industry.

**How can you help your employees learn more about your industry? The following suggestions—some of which may seem quite ambitious—will give you some ideas:**

- Allow employees to stay current with industry changes and meet industry movers and shakers by sending them to conferences and trade shows.
- Go to the library and look up government documents relevant to the industry and publications by industry associations.
- Budget for membership in professional associations. Then make sure your employees have the opportunity to read association publications. You might even want to photocopy and distribute an occasional article from an association magazine or journal, especially industry overviews and best practice case studies
- Look for books, publications, and research information on the Internet that covers practices and trends in industry categories related to your own.
- Join Internet discussion groups on subjects dealing with your industry or management in general.



- Join associations or encourage your organisation to do so based on common denominators, such as type of business or industry, organisation size and ranking, market niche, and so on.

Remember: your purpose in following any of these suggestions is to help your employees become more motivated by helping them understand the significance of what they and your organisation are doing. So be sure to be sensitive to their needs and feelings and attentive to the dangers of trying to do too

much. Some of your employees might feel overwhelmed by information and intimidated by perceived expectations. Your purpose is to allow them to explore their horizons, not to run them into the ground! Be sure you tell them as much.

#### **Step 4. Encourage Intelligent Risk-Taking**

Risk has long been considered a four-letter word for success. But creative and calculated risk-taking can improve any organisation. That means that management should help employees try new ways of doing their work, of experimenting to make improvements, and encourage and support them in taking those risks.

Why aren't more employees willing to take risks? Probably because the few times they tried to and things went wrong, they were either fired or severely disciplined. Even when



When organisations survive and thrive, it's generally because managers know how to change with their situations—and sometimes keep ahead of the changes around them. That's certainly so when they allow or even encourage innovative thinking among their employees. That means that managers need to help their employees feel motivated to try different things.

How can you inspire your employees to think in new ways and encourage them to innovate on the job? Here are a few techniques to guide you

- Set aside special time to brainstorm with employees and investigate innovative and creative new ideas
- Support innovative ideas and help implement them
- Tell everyone in the organisation about the creative ideas of their co-workers, through special announcements, in conversations, and organisational publications
- Use music to inspire creative energy.
- You may be thinking, "All of this makes sense, but it won't work in my department." Well, maybe you're right—but *why not?* What keeps your people from thinking



creatively? If you believe there are obstacles, it's up to you to identify them and do something about removing them. How you do that depends, of course, on your particular environment. But here are a few general suggestions:

- Show faith in your employees' capabilities by empowering them to try new ways of doing tasks and providing the resources they need to do this. If you don't have faith in your people, you send the message that innovation is not welcome.
- Address and eliminate any fears employees have about creative thinking. Some people, for example, don't think they're capable of being creative. Others tend to always focus on matters of practicality: they analyse and judge ideas as quickly as they arise.
- Make sure everyone understands the basic principle of brainstorming—to provide a free and open environment that encourages and inspires everyone to offer whatever ideas may occur to him or her—no matter how "impractical" they may seem at first.
- Regularly emphasize the positive aspects of innovative solutions—and the disadvantages of always doing the same things in the same ways.
- Never penalise anyone for trying something new that ends up being a mistake. Encourage, instead, learning from the experience.
- Encourage freedom of expression and unique thinking.
- Don't assume something won't work just because nobody's tried it.
- Suspend critical judgment when someone presents an idea. Talk about how you can work together to make it work, not what's wrong with it.

- Loosen up and lighten up. Don't take yourself too seriously.

***Contributions from internal and external sources are sought and valued in developing and refining new ideas and approaches***

## **Resourcing**

“Resources” include:

- Right numbers of people with appropriate skills to do the required work
- Time
- Finances
- Facilities
- Equipment
- Technology
- Data and information
- Plans, Policies, Procedures and Work Instructions.

In most organisations, leaders develop strategic plans. To ensure that strategic goals and objectives are met by the relevant people, operational plans are developed and implemented. If these plans are not adequately resourced, plans risk falling short of their desired outcome.

In effective organisations, budgets are constructed after key goals and objectives have been decided for a particular timeframe. Budgets can then be focused on providing the financial resources to allow key goals and objectives to be met.

Relevant people in all departments should be consulted and have a say in how resources are allocated across a workplace.

A documented procedure detailing methods for resource allocation is essential for the optimal functioning of any workplace.

### Activity - Resourcing

Given the list of “resources” above, explain how well “resourced” you see your company.

Now, answer ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ to the following statements:

	Question	Yes	No
1	I am involved in the planning process and have some say over the resources I receive		
2	The organisation’s resources are identified - high priority goals and objectives		
3	Our technology is constantly kept up to date		
4	Employees are provided with training before they are given a new job to do		
5	We are given the right equipment and machinery to do our work well		
6	Our facilities are well maintained		
7	We have adequate policies, plans, procedures and work instructions to enable people to know where they are going and the standards of work expected		
8	We monitor the use of resources and re-allocate them if necessary		

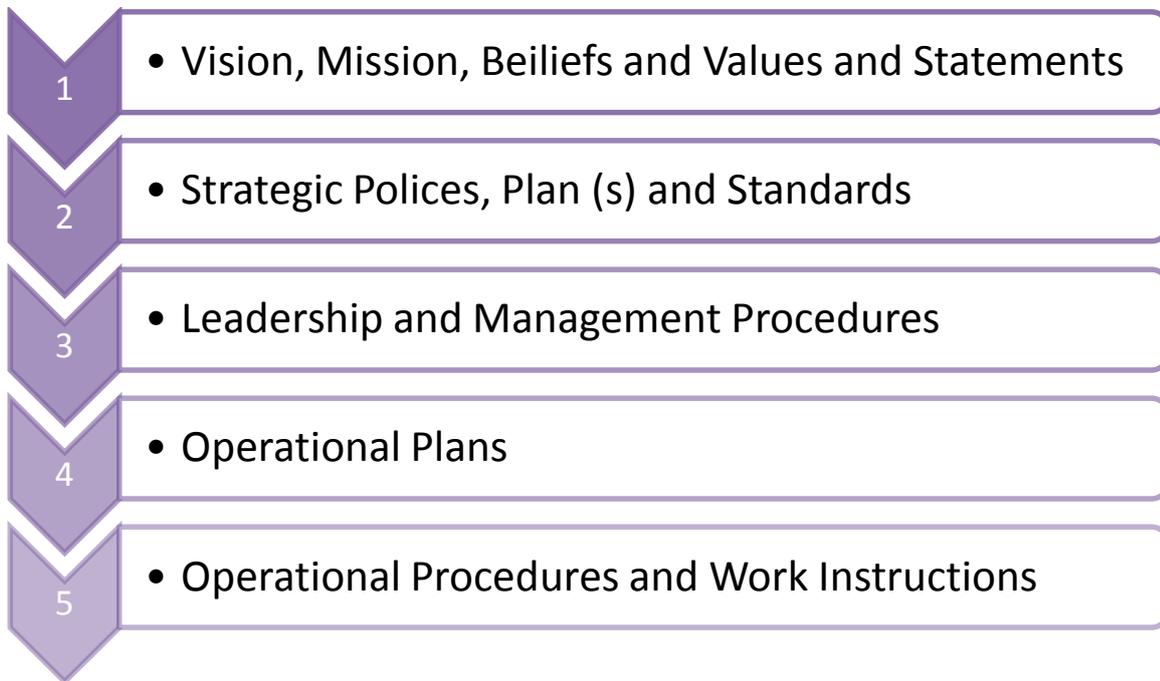
SCORING: The more “No” answers, the less adequate resources you have.

***Processes are implemented to ensure that issues raised are resolved promptly or referred to relevant personnel as required***

### Philosophies, Policies, Plans and Procedures

Leaders have a primary responsibility to provide adequate information to all employees about where the organisation is going and how it is going to get there. This is usually provided in the form of documented and communicated philosophy or belief statements, policies, plans and procedures.

There is a hierarchy of linked documentation in effective workplaces.



It is insufficient simply to provide the above documentation. Organisational effectiveness needs to be accompanied by:

- Appropriate consultation during the preparation of documentation
- Systematic communication of requirements
- Training (as required)
- Monitoring and record keeping
- Measurements of success
- Review and continuous modification to reflect changing needs
- The implementation of processes that allow constant multi-level feedback.

The purpose of providing and involving people in the setting up of an organisational direction is to gain high levels of commitment and thereby reduce variation in the provision of key products and services. Important stakeholders should always be consulted on their needs and ideas.



# Develop Trust and Confidence

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***All internal and external contacts are treated with integrity, respect and empathy***

## **What is Leadership?**

Do you believe leaders are born or made? Explain.

## **Definition of Leadership**

Leadership consists of a set of conceptual, human and task skills which can all be learned if one is given the opportunity.

## **Commonly Accepted Leadership Effectiveness Factors**

- Matching Leadership Style to people's leadership requirements – in other words “contracting” for leadership style
- Establishing and communicating a unified ‘Vision’ and set of organisational Values
- Ensuring there are appropriate structures and designated authority levels in place to meet organisational goals and objectives
- Ensuring there are adequate resources allocated to meet organisational goals and objectives
- Providing the necessary philosophies, policies, plans and procedures that will give people the direction and support necessary for them to make a commitment to meeting the organisation's goals and objectives in a consistent manner
- Providing everyone in the organisation with the opportunity to develop and exercise leadership
- Leaders must show competence to engender trust and confidence in their people, customers and suppliers.

## Leadership Style

People in workplaces need to know what their leaders expect of them.

The main goal of good leaders is to encourage each person in an organisation to become self sufficient and empowered to carry out work responsibilities with minimum levels of supervision.

Good leaders develop processes for identifying people's needs for:

- Direction
- Coaching
- Support
- Delegation.

Each person in an organisation will need differing levels of direction, coaching, support and delegation, depending on their ability and confidence levels. For example:

- People with high confidence, but low ability need to be consulted in making decisions about their work.
- People with low confidence and high ability need your support and encouragement to trust their own ability.
- People with high ability and improving confidence can usually make good decisions with your support.
- People with high ability and confidence levels can make their own decisions and you can delegate fully to them.

Though most people have a preferred leadership style, effective leaders possess the necessary leadership knowledge and skills to enable them to be flexible in their leadership style.

## ***The organisation's social, ethical and business standards are used to develop and maintain effective relationships***

### **Structure**

Effective leaders ensure that appropriate structures are in place to enable organisational goals and objectives to be met.

Shallow hierarchies work better than deep ones because communications don't have to go through as many layers and there are fewer power struggles. The most effective structures are those in which there are few barriers between departments.

Most organisations have a documented structure that looks something like the one below:

## Authority

People with little or no power over their own work become reluctant to accept responsibility, make decisions, and act without direction and supervision. Effective leaders on the other hand, ensure that people have the necessary decision-making authority to enable them to do their work efficiently and effectively, and contribute to the organisation's future plans.

### Activity – Structure and Authority

How does your company's structure affect you?

Choose three positions in your company, including your own, and rate how much decision-making authority the person in that position has.

**1 = Absolute    2 = Can only make recommendations    3 = None**

Position	Level of Authority	Examples of Decision-making

## **The Work Environment**

There are some important factors to consider in relation to the work environment. These include:

- Physical Environment
- Culture

### **Physical Environment**

The workplace must be a suitable place in which to work and comply with Occupational Health, Safety and Injury Management legislation and codes of practice.

The physical work environment makes a difference to performance.

The following can have a hazardous effect on the physical work environment:

- Poor lighting
- Unsafe / poorly maintained equipment
- Unsanitary kitchens and toilets
- Polluted air
- Poorly designed equipment and facilities
- Unmarked safe pathways (for forklifts etc)
- Poor emergency signage
- Lack of safety and environmental management procedures
- Poorly maintained buildings and surrounds
- Toxic building materials and other hazardous substances
- Unsafe use of drugs and alcohol
- Lack of safety equipment and personal protective equipment
- Blocked walkways
- Stored equipment that is difficult to reach.

***Trust and confidence of colleagues, customers and suppliers is gained and maintained through competent performance***

### **Workplace Culture**

Culture can be described as the “personality” of an organisation. Culture has as much of an effect on the people who work in an organisation as standard rules and regulations. It

affects quality of work, internal relationships and relationships with customers and suppliers.

Much that is to do with workplace culture is hidden. People often describe culture as “the way we do things around here” and much of this is not written down.

Workplace cultures can be strong or weak. In strong cultures, people generally hold similar values and can work reasonably easily together. In weak cultures there are generally a variety of values, resulting in a lack of cohesion and low commitment levels.

A workplace culture is reflected by things like:

- What gets rewarded and punished and how this is done
- Formal, written rules
- Informal, generally accepted “rules” (e.g. you may formally have to start work at 9 am, but you know that it is the done thing to get there before 8.30 am)
  - What the workplace looks like (tidy/untidy, personal/impersonal)
  - The stories that are told
  - The number and types of “clubs”
  - How people are dressed
  - The language that is used
  - The degree of openness and honesty in communications
  - Symbols and rituals

### **Workplace Culture**

Write a description of your view of the workplace culture in your company and decide whether you think it is weak or strong.

(Include comments about formal rules and regulations, informal “unwritten” rules, power, relationships, what gets rewarded, what gets punished, historical stories that are told, values, commitment, work satisfaction.)

Discuss what you have written with someone else.

Identify and write down similarities and differences.

- Similarities:
- Differences:

### **Important Factors about Work:**

People need to gain satisfaction from their work.

In order to perform work to desired standards, people need to know and understand their roles and how their roles relate to the roles of others in the workplace.

If people have high levels of autonomy, responsibility and the authority to make decisions about their work, they are more likely to do the work well.

Many jobs can be monotonous and repetitive. All people need challenge in their work if they are to gain a sense of achievement and assist in maintaining the sustainability of their organisation in times of rapid change. Thus, Leaders and Managers have a key responsibility for enriching jobs as much as possible and ensuring people have access to opportunities for continuous personal and professional growth.

It is not always true that “no news is good news”. An effective performance management system incorporating effective, continuous performance feedback processes is essential for development and maintenance of high performing individuals and teams.

### **Types of Work**

Work design is very important to people. Monotonous, boring jobs do little for commitment, morale and job satisfaction. All people will work more productively if they are gaining satisfaction from meaningful work.

Leaders / managers have a key role to play in ensuring all people have some challenge in their day-to-day work. This means that:

- They may need to question whether a particular task really needs to be done at all
- Monotonous jobs may sometimes have to be shared. A team approach to work management can be very effective
- Repetitious tasks that can be computerised **should** be
- People should be given broader responsibilities if the bulk of their work is unchallenging
- There should be job advancement plans in place for all people
- There should be structured processes in place that allow people to present ideas for work re-design and innovation.

Assumptions will not be made about a person’s capability based on gender, age, nationality, religion, sexual preference.

All people will have equal access to engagement in meaningful work. This may sometimes require networking with different departmental managers to achieve team and individual outcomes.

### **Activity – Types of Work**

Write down the things you think leaders and managers should take into account when designing jobs.

With a partner, identify any differences and similarities and then modify your original description if you wish to.

### ***Interpersonal styles and methods are adjusted to meet the organisation's social and cultural environment***

#### **Role Clarity**

People need to be clear about what they are expected to do in their work and should have some say in the design of their own work and the documentation of their job descriptions or duty statements.

A person's role should be formally negotiated from the outset of the recruitment process, confirmed in the job and person duty statement, and reinforced in training and development and performance management plans and activities.

A person's role statement should identify all major requirements – not just task requirements. If a person is expected to comply with legislation, take on leadership responsibilities, participate as a member of a team, contribute to the development of a quality system and / or the development of organisational goals, these requirements should be included in role statements. Key performance measurement indicators should also be included.

Line management and reporting responsibilities should be agreed upon and clarified.

#### **Activity – Role Clarity**

Why is it important for people to be clear about their roles?

What should be included in a role statement?

Who should be involved in designing the role statement?

## **Job Enrichment and Personal Growth**

### **Job Enrichment**

“Enrichment” means giving added dimensions to a job. This can mean giving people higher levels of responsibility in the same job, expanding the scope of the tasks to be performed within a job, or giving people related additional jobs which are more meaningful.

Enriched jobs are more satisfying, especially when a person’s job is monotonous and consists of small, repetitive tasks.

### **Personal Growth**

People will be more interested and capable at work if they have the skills to do their work and have opportunities to improve their skill levels.

People need to have opportunities to improve their interpersonal conceptual and leadership skills as well as their work task skills.

### **Activity – Job Enrichment & Personal Growth**

What does job enrichment mean to you?

How can a Frontline Manager’s job be enriched?

What are your personal growth needs?

***Other members of the work team are encouraged to follow examples set, according to organisation's policies and procedures***

### **Responsibility and Authority in Decision Making**

People who are given appropriate levels of responsibility for decision making will demonstrate a commitment to the organisation and will be more interested in their work.

Effective organisations have documented, communicated and implemented consultation and decision-making procedures, all of which have been agreed to through consultation.

All people should be trained in how to make good individual and team decisions. A consistent method should be used by every-one.

### **Activity – Decision Making**

Tick 'True' or 'False' to the following:

	Question	True	False
1	People should be given responsibility and authority to make decisions about their own work		
2	Organisations should have a documented authority structure		
3	Responsibilities and authority levels should be decided by the Leaders or Manager without consultation		
4	Responsibilities should be identified in documented work procedures		
5	Organisations should have a documented decision making procedure		
6	Most people in work places can't be trusted to make their own decisions. This is what Leaders and Managers get paid to do		
7	Training in decision making is essential if good decisions are to be made		
8	Decisions should be based on facts and data		

Share your responses with the person alongside you. Were there any differences? If so, why?



# Develop and Maintain Networks and Relationships

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***Networks are used to identify and build relationships***

## **What are networks?**

Networks involve people you support, and who in return, support you. Networks include both groups of people and individuals.

Networks work most effectively when there is mutual respect and you enjoy one another's company. It then becomes a pleasure to contact this person for work related reasons and they also enjoy receiving the call.

Networks can provide benefit for a number of reasons. They provide opportunities to:

- Bounce questions and ideas around
- Ask advice
- Gain feedback
- Sell your products or services
- Discuss industry norms and future changes
- Undertake referrals
- Exchange business/trading deals

When you look at all these reasons to network, it highlights how much leverage can be gained by having an extensive network.

**Remember** – networking is a two way street. As you show support and integrity when helping others in your network, the same will usually come back to you.

## **Activity - Networking**

Answer the following questions in relation to work:

Do you network at present?

Look at the people with whom you currently come into contact. Who else could you add to your network?

	<b>Reason for networking</b>	<b>Who are your current networks on this situation</b>	<b>Who else could you network with?</b>
<b>1</b>	sell your products or services		
<b>2</b>	bounce questions and ideas around		
<b>3</b>	ask advice		
<b>4</b>	gain feedback		
<b>5</b>	discuss industry norms and future changes		
<b>6</b>	referrals		
<b>7</b>	business/trading deals		
<b>8</b>	Other (list)		

***Networks and other work relationships are used to provide identifiable benefits for the team and organisation***

There are many benefits for networking

**Activity – Benefits of Networking**

Look at the reason for why we might contact our networks in this table and list how networking will benefit your team and organisation.

	<b>Reason for networking</b>	<b>Benefit to your team</b>	<b>Benefit to your organisation</b>
<b>1</b>	sell your products or services		
<b>2</b>	bounce questions and ideas around		
<b>3</b>	ask advice		
<b>4</b>	gain feedback		
<b>5</b>	discuss industry norms and future changes		
<b>6</b>	referrals		
<b>7</b>	business/trading deals		
<b>8</b>	Other (list)		



# Manage Difficulties into Positive Outcomes

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***Difficulties are identified and analysed, and action is taken to rectify the situation within the requirements of the organisation and relevant legislation***

## **Problem Solving**

A systematic approach to problem solving is better than an ad-hoc one as it enables people to make the best possible decisions. So people need to be trained in ways to solve problems effectively.

A model that will assist you in problem solving is shown below:

- Collect the facts
- Identify the problem
- Identify causes of the problem
- Consult relevant people to check all available facts have been collected and all possible causes have been identified
- Apply relevant problem solving techniques to analyse the causes
- Identify possible solutions
- Select the best solution(s)
- Identify monitoring methods and measures that will be taken
- Allocate resources and responsibilities
- Communicate and implement the preferred solution(s)
- Monitor and measure results and effectiveness
- Go back to the drawing board if necessary

## **Activity – Problem Solving**

### **Individual Exercise**

You are having a problem with some staff being late for team meetings. Most people get there on time, but there are three people who just never seem to make it. When they do come, they are always late.

You have some team meeting ground rules, and one of them is “People will get to meetings on time”.

Describe the process you would use to solve this problem. (List the steps you would take).

Share your process with a workgroup partner and explain why you selected the steps you did. Can you think of alternate ways to improve your process?

### ***Colleagues are guided and supported to resolve work difficulties***

#### **Individual and Team Skills**

All people have valuable skills and knowledge they can contribute at work. Teams of people, if well-trained, will make better decisions than individuals. Individuals possess a wealth of knowledge and skills that often goes untapped in the workplace. Creating a knowledge and skills database is a good start to being able to make the best use of people's skills, knowledge and talents.

When people work in teams, their combined individual knowledge and skills enable a

“synergy” to take place -  $1+1=4$ , rather than

$1+1=2$ . Empowered teams are an asset to

managers – they allow managers to spend

their time where it is really needed in planning

and monitoring achievement towards goals

and objectives.



Every team-based workplace should have a formal, documented team management procedure and team development plan.

#### **Activity – Individual and Team Skills**

Making the most of individual and team skills frees up the time of Frontline Managers and helps employees feel valued and appreciated. This gives them power and is an important part of relationship management.

#### **Individual Exercise**

Outline the process you use to identify the skills and knowledge levels of the people you manage and lead.

Indicate in what areas there are opportunities for improvement.

How would these improvements be achieved?

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## **Questionnaire**

Complete the questionnaire on the next page to rate the effectiveness of your normal work team.

First, prioritise each of the elements in order of importance to you (use 1 as your highest priority, 2 as your second highest, 3 as your third highest and so on)

Secondly, rate how well you think your normal work team reflects these elements (Write an **H** if this is clearly present, an **M** if you are part way there and an **L** if this element is not present in your team)

## Team Effectiveness Questionnaire

### Priority Rating

- |   |   |         |
|---|---|---------|
| 1 | The team is clear about what it wants to achieve  | ( ) ( ) |
| 2 | Issues are always confronted and dealt with openly  | ( ) ( ) |
| 3 | Members show support for each other and there is<br>a high level of trust between them      | ( ) ( ) |
| 4 | Both co-operation and conflict are used to get the<br>best results                          | ( ) ( ) |
| 5 | There are sound and understood procedures for<br>decision making                            | ( ) ( ) |
| 6 | Team leadership, where required, is of a high<br>standard and in the most appropriate hands | ( ) ( ) |
| 7 | The team regularly reviews the way it operates<br>and learns from the experience            | ( ) ( ) |
| 8 | Individual and team development needs are<br>regularly reviewed                             | ( ) ( ) |
| 9 | Relationships within the team, and with<br>other teams, are sound                           | ( ) ( ) |

Indicate in what areas there are opportunities for improvement.

How would these improvements be achieved?

<b>Opportunity for Improvement</b>	<b>Way(s) this could be achieved</b>

## **Commitment**

Commitment means putting in more than a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. It involves people in work places going that extra distance and adding real value to the organisation. It is demonstrated when people do more than what is simply expected of them at work. Some people call it a "performance" input as compared with a "participation" input.

To show high levels of commitment in a workplace, people need a number of things:

- Role and job clarity
- Clearly stated values
- Correct levels of support and direction
- Demonstrated levels of commitment from senior people
- Good relationships with others
- Correct levels of coaching and autonomy
- The resources they need to do their work
- Consistent procedures for communication, document and data management, performance management, consultation and decision making, leadership, records management, organisation review, training and development, work tasks, etc.
- Recognition and appreciation from their manager and / or team members

## **Activity - Commitment**

In a previous activity we looked at the issue of staff turning up to meetings late or not turning up to meetings at all. These behaviours can be a sign of low commitment.

Using that scenario, answer the following questions:

- What are some common causes for people turning up late to meetings?
- What are some common causes for people not attending meetings?
- What are some ways that you could improve staff commitment to your organisation?

***Workplace outcomes are regularly reviewed and improved in consultation with relevant personnel***

Evaluation methods should be built in to all tasks and projects, at each stage, so that the degree of success of organisational goals is monitored along the way. Methods of evaluation can include questionnaires from participants, discussion with various managers, regular meetings with relevant staff to discuss progress and solve problems, and a joint formal evaluation progress involving all relevant staff.

Evaluation will help you to learn how to manage a project/task more successfully next time. It will also assist your organisation to develop a plan for future projects.

Consider the following questions which could also be included in an Evaluation Checklist:

- Definition of success criteria
- Were objectives accurate?
- How were they arrived at?
- How were they measured?

### **Steps in the project life cycle**

- Where was the team effective?
- Where were the problems?
- Organisation and control tools/charts etc.
- Did they help or hinder?
- What problems were encountered and how were they dealt with?
- Were constraints too rigid or too loose?
- How good were your links with stakeholders?
  - Strengths & weaknesses?
- How effective was your coordination and communication with the organisation, team and the stakeholders?
- Activity - Evaluation

Think about a work project or task you have recently completed and using the above evaluation checklist, evaluate the success of the project or task.

Now ask the same questions to at least one key stakeholder. Compare the answers and overall success, considering all feedback.

Note what you will do differently next time.

***Poor work performance is managed within the organisation's processes***

## Performance Management

Performance Management provides the necessary link between individual and organisational goals. In organisations, it:

- Provides feedback on individual performance
- Provides information on the type of training required, both for the individual and for the organisation
- Clarifies standards of performance
- Assists in promotion remuneration determinations.

Leaders and managers need to get to know their people and establish an environment conducive to the continuous exchange of feedback. An employee's performance is linked to the relationship that has been established with their supervisors and formal, consistent performance management processes allow for monitoring and improving performance on a continuous basis. A once a year appraisal is really of little value, especially if it is the sole review method used to make decisions about promotion and salary increase.

All employees should be trained in how to give and receive feedback, and in how to manage conflicts and differing points of view.

Employees with monitoring and performance management responsibilities should be trained in observation, performance planning, performance measurement and record keeping skills.

Everyone (including leaders and managers) should have a documented, monitored performance management plan with accompanying training and development plans and people should know the work standards against which their performance is being measured.

Reasons for poor performance should be identified and the situation rectified quickly.

Poor performance is more often caused by the system, not the person.



## Benefits of Performance Management

There are many benefits for both employees and their organisations in having well-designed performance management systems. These include, among others, a means for:

- Providing constructive and objective feedback on an employee's job performance

- Matching employees with the correct job
- Meeting an employee's professional development needs
- Strengthening the relationship between employee and his/her supervisor
- Aligning employees with the organisation's vision
- Providing a more objective way of remunerating employees.

### **Activity – Performance Management**

With a partner or in a small group, complete the following:

List the elements of an effective performance management process.

Describe how a good performance management process can assist your organisation.

Describe a leader / manager's role in managing performance.

Briefly describe how your own performance is managed, monitored and measured.

### ***Conflict is managed constructively within the organisation's processes***

#### **Conflict – It's Not All Bad**

Conflict can be positive if:

- It clears the air
- We can relate more effectively as a consequence
- We can manage future conflicts more effectively
- We have gained new information, ideas and insights
- Our group is more cohesive
- The group (or individual) has had an opportunity to measure their power, strength and abilities

Can you think of a major advancement that did not have conflict as its initial reason for discovery?

Conflict should therefore be seen as an opportunity to learn more about the other person/people and our relationship with them and to use this information to improve our capacity to work together.

### **Recognising the Conflict**

The first step in the process of resolving conflict is to recognise that you have a conflict in the first place. Some conflicts develop over time (sometimes a long time) and this may desensitize you from seeing the conflict. It's like the notion of the frog in the saucepan – heat the water slowly and the frog will stay until it dies, but thrust a frog into hot water and it reacts immediately and leaps out.

### **Possible Sources of Conflict in Organisations & Teams**

Conflict occurs at many levels within our lives. At work conflict is rarely uncomplicated. It is reasonable to suggest that for many of us experiencing conflict, the true cause or source of the conflict is unknown or hidden. This is because conflict is generally enmeshed in a number of areas of our work.

For effective organisational or team functioning to occur there needs to be a common set of goals and issues to focus on. Conflict can occur when there are disagreements or lack of clarity about any of these issues.

The following headings illustrate this in relation to common work based conflicts.

#### **Environment/Context – The Where**

When influences outside the organisation or team impinge on its function, eg. Political agenda, wider organisations, community, management hierarchy, funding and resources, physical location, pressures from interest groups, other agencies.

#### **Goals – The What**

When there is disagreement on what the organisation or team should be doing, e.g. Difference in values, beliefs, vision, mission, goals.

#### **Roles – The Who**

When what members expect, or want, of one another differs, e.g. Expectations about who does what, when, may not be met, roles may overlap, some tasks may not be done by anyone, lines of responsibility may be unclear, work styles may clash, or there may be power or status issues.

#### **Procedures – The How as A Team**

When there is a breakdown in communication and information flow, decision-making, problem-solving and conflict resolution procedures e.g. misunderstandings, failure to listen and hear each other or pass on information.

### **Interpersonal – The How as People**

When openness, respect, trust and support between each other is not present, e.g. When people do not feel acknowledged and supported professionally or personally, when respect is not demonstrated or when interpersonal behaviours are unacceptable or break the norm for the organisation (eg. yelling, threatened or real violence).

### **Personal – How as an Individual**

When people have personal issues, attitudes or views that get in the way of handling conflict well e.g. Things happening at home which impinge on how one reacts at work, high personal stress levels, when one is unwell or unhealthy, incident triggers “old stuff” and one reacts in past ways or where one holds different political or religious views from others.

## Twelve Core Skills for Conflict Resolution

<b>Win -Win</b>	•Potential opponents are treated as problem-solving partners.
<b>Creative Response</b>	•Positive attitudes to addressing conflicts are displayed.
<b>Empathy</b>	•Speakers acknowledge the other team's point of view and add value to it.
<b>Appropriate Assertiveness</b>	•Without blaming or attacking, needs are clearly stated.
<b>Co-operative Power</b>	•Where power imbalance affects decision-making; appropriate responses to the inequalities are defined.
<b>Managing Emotions</b>	•The speaker's emotions are expressed and the other team's emotions are acknowledged.
<b>Willingness to Resolve</b>	•Benefits of resolving are developed for all parties.
<b>Mapping the Conflict</b>	•All key parties are identified and their needs and concerns are outlined.
<b>Designing Options</b>	•A wide range of options are considered without debating or justifying at this stage.
<b>Negotiation</b>	•Fair, just and common sense offers are made.
<b>Mediation</b>	•The option of an impartial and objective third party mediator is presented.
<b>Broadening Perspectives</b>	•Suggested solutions are presented in terms of how they affect the broader context beyond the issue itself.

## Unproductive Conflict Strategies

- Avoidance – flight, physical or psychological
- Non-negotiation – refusing to discuss the conflict, or listen to the other's point of view
- Re-definition – re-defining the conflict so it becomes no conflict at all, or is irrelevant to the individual

- Force – physically or in other ways threatening people to accept a way of thinking or behaving
- Minimalisation – making light of conflicts, hoping they will go away in time
- Blame – choosing one factor or person as responsible – doomed to fail
- Silencers – crying, screaming, and pretending to lose control, developing a physical reaction, e.g. a headache.
- Stocking up – storing up grievances and holding them ready to dump on the person with whom we are now in conflict
- Belt-lining – hitting below the belt; used to win the fight and destroy the opponent
- Manipulation – avoidance of open conflict, using a wide range of diversionary tactics
- Person rejection – withholding love and affection, until the other person breaks down under the rejection. This could be seen as harassment.

### **Productive Conflict Strategies**

- Openness – State your feelings and thoughts openly
- React openly
- Own your thoughts and feelings
- Address the issues – don't attack the person
- Empathy – Listen with empathy, put yourself in the other person's shoes
- Supportiveness – describe the behaviours with which you have difficulty
- State your position tentatively – demonstrate flexibility and willingness to change
- Positiveness – Capitalise on agreements
- Express positive feelings about the other person
- Be positive about the prospect of conflict resolution
- Equality – Treat the other person as an equal
- Give each other equal time
- Express a respect for the inevitable differences

### **Activity - Conflict**

Discuss where there is potential conflict in your team at the moment

What is the source of the conflict?

What strategies have you implemented in order to resolve the conflict?